

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



A335  
M342

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
LIBRARY



BOOK NUMBER      A335  
210552      M342

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE  
 AGRICULTURAL ESTIMATES DIVISION  
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

January 6, 1956

FARMERS PAYING MORE  
 FOR BETTER QUALITY TELEPHONE SERVICE

Farmers paid 4 percent more for local telephone service in July 1955 than a year earlier, according to an annual survey made by the Crop Reporting Board. This survey, which included reports from over 22,000 farmers throughout the United States, also indicated that the increased average cost of telephone service was accompanied by an improvement in the class of telephone service received by farmers.

The average payment by farmers for local telephone service in July 1955 was \$3.46 compared with \$3.33 a year earlier and with the 1947-53 average of \$2.67. Total monthly charges for both local and long distance services averaged \$5.14 for July 1955 - 22 cents more than a year earlier. Increases in average telephone bills for local service this year were rather uniform in the neighborhood of 5 percent for all regions, except for the Pacific States which showed a somewhat larger increase. By geographic regions, the highest average monthly telephone bills for local service were \$4.35 for New England and \$4.15 for Pacific Coast States. The lowest by far was \$2.86 per month in the West North Central Region where there are a large number of farmer-owned lines. Much of the regional variation in cost is a reflection of the difference in type and quality of service provided to farmers.

Average Monthly Local Farm Telephone Bills, By Regions, July, 1947-55 1/

Regions	: 1947-49:		1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
	: Average:	: Dol.						
New England :	3.17	3.70	3.83	3.91	4.11	4.23	4.35	
Middle Atlantic:	2.76	3.06	3.24	3.32	3.39	3.39	3.50	
E. N. Central:	2.22	2.59	2.81	2.97	3.23	3.32	3.41	
W.N. Central :	1.81	2.19	2.41	2.59	2.71	2.75	2.86	
S. Atlantic :	2.58	3.08	3.22	3.48	3.61	3.75	3.86	
E.S. Central :	2.50	2.98	3.08	3.18	3.23	3.42	3.50	
W.S. Central :	2.02	2.32	2.63	2.95	3.25	3.46	3.64	
Mountain :	2.65	2.95	3.02	3.43	3.55	3.74	3.91	
Pacific :	3.08	3.52	3.64	3.82	4.00	3.93	4.15	
United States :	2.29	2.67	2.87	3.06	3.24	3.33	3.46	

1/The survey made in July and August requested data based on "last bill". This was generally a bill for a period ending in late June, July, or early August.

As of July 1955, about 51 percent of the farmers with telephone service had dial phones. This indicates a sharp increase over the recent past. Of the remaining farmers, 18 percent had battery telephones while 31 percent had magneto or

crank telephones. A year earlier an estimated 45 percent of the farmers had dial service, 20 percent had battery service, and 35 percent had magneto service.

According to the survey, about 4 percent of the farmers with telephone service had private lines, one-fifth were on 2 to 4 party lines, 46 percent were on lines with 5 to 8 parties, and 30 percent on lines with 9 or more parties. In the past few years, there has been a decrease in the number of farmers on rural lines with 9 or more parties, an increase in the number on 5 through 8 party lines, and very little change in the private and 2 to 4 party lines.

About 45 percent of the telephones in farm homes were served by companies in the Bell system, according to the survey. Cooperative and mutual companies served 10 percent of the farms, while service for the remaining 45 percent was provided by independent commercial companies. Nearly one-fifth of the farmers with telephones in the West North Central Region were served by cooperative mutual systems compared with less than 1 percent in the New England and Middle Atlantic States. In New England, 86 percent of all farm subscribers were served directly by companies in the Bell system compared with only 27 percent in the East North Central Region and 30 percent in the West North Central States.

TYPE OF TELEPHONE SERVICE ON FARMS, BY REGIONS, JULY 1955

Region	Dial service	Battery service	Magneto (crank type) service	Private line	2 to 4 parties on line	5 to 8 parties on line	9 or more parties on line
N. Eng.	70	15	15	10	39	40	11
M. Atl.	59	25	16	7	21	48	24
E. N. Cent.	47	15	38	2	11	46	41
W. N. Cent.	32	12	56	3	11	41	45
S. Atl.	68	17	15	5	27	50	18
E. S. Cent.	60	25	15	5	34	55	6
W. S. Cent.	49	24	27	5	28	53	14
Mount.	49	34	17	5	24	43	28
Pacific	80	12	8	7	29	36	28
U. S.	51	18	31	4	20	46	30

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
Washington 25, D.C.

Penalty for private use to avoid  
payment of postage \$300.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS





